



NEW YORK

Buckle Up New York (BUNY), Click It or Ticket

► AT-A-GLANCE

► Project Characteristics
Collaborative
Enforcement

► Program Areas
Occupant Protection

► Targeted Populations
New York Motorists

► Type of Jurisdiction
State

► Jurisdiction Size
19 million

► Funding
3 - 4 Million Annually

► Contact
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Problem Identification

In 1984, New York State enacted the first mandatory safety belt use law in the nation. Since then, the safety belt compliance rate has increased to 85 percent, a rate considerably higher than the national average. Data compiled by the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) indicates that failure to wear safety restraints is the most prevalent factor associated with traffic fatalities in each of the last two years for which there is complete data. Thirty percent of highway deaths in New York State occurred to occupants who were unrestrained. Contrary to widespread public perception, not buckling up was a greater factor in highway deaths than alcohol or excessive speed in both 2000 and 2001. In-patient hospital costs for unbelted crash victims are 50 percent higher than for belted victims. Society pays 85 percent of those costs.

Goals and Objectives

Buckle Up New York (BUNY), Click It or Ticket is a statewide, zero tolerance enforcement campaign. The campaign is designed to increase safety restraint use in New York State and prevent highway fatalities and injuries caused by unrestrained vehicle occupants.

The project's objectives are to:

- Increase safety belt compliance to 86 percent in 2004; and
- Save an estimated 148 lives and more than \$400 million dollars in cost to the public.

Strategies and Activities

The *Buckle Up New York (BUNY), Click It or Ticket* campaign implemented the following strategies and activities to achieve its goals:

- Used the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee's (GTSC) new EZ App process, a fill-in-the-blank grant application provided online, to more efficiently apply for funding. Although EZ APP is an administrative function and not an enforcement strategy, it is one of the outcomes or measures that translate into more enforcement action taken.
- Collaborated with State Police to develop and lead the following clearly defined enforcement strategy:
 - Outreach to every chief of police and sheriff in the state (including the New York City Police Department);
 - Conduct three (now two) yearly enforcement waves using multi-agency checkpoints, media outreach and other efforts, including Public Service Announcements (PSA's) and earned media;
 - Centralize data collection and target low use areas.
 - Implement expanded efforts component that provides funding support for sustained enforcement efforts throughout the year.

Results

Prior to the start of the campaign in 1999, the safety belt compliance rate in New York was 75 percent. In 2003, it climbed to 85 percent. The *Buckle Up New York (BUNY)*, *Click It or Ticket* campaign achieved immediate results starting in May 1999. Results include:

- Increased the number of safety belt tickets issued in New York from approximately 300,000 in 1998, to 500,000 in 1999, and 550,000 in 2002
- Increased the safety belt compliance rate from 75 percent in 1998, to 80 percent in 2001, and 85 percent in 2004
- Decreased the number of unrestrained occupants in fatal and serious injury crashes, from 25 percent in 1998 to 19 percent in 2001, according to police reports
- Decreased total statewide highway fatalities from 1,585 in 1999 to 1,444 in 2000
- Used EZ APP that enabled 258 police agencies to participate and receive funding for the BUNY program alone in fiscal year 2000. Prior to 2000, the GTSC processed approximately 150 total grants each year for all programs.